

III. Amendments to the Specification

Please amend Paragraph [0010] as follows:

[0010] The accompanying drawings illustrate preferred embodiments of the invention, as well as other information pertinent to the disclosure, in which:

FIG. 1A is a top plan view of a one-piece post cladding element;

FIG. 1B is a top plan view of the cladding element as extruded;

FIG. 1C is a top plan view of the cladding element of FIG. 1A shown flexed to open a seam closure therein; and

FIG. 2 is a partial perspective view of the cladding element of FIGS. 1A and 1C shown coupled to a post;

FIG.3A is a partial view of an embodiment of male-female connectors including barbs;

FIG. 3B is a partial view of an embodiment of male-female connectors including a latch;

FIG. 4 is a partial perspective view of the cladding assembly of FIG. 2 having a decorative molding element attached thereto.

Please amend Paragraph [0016] as follows:

[0016] As mentioned, FIG. 2 illustrates a cladding element 10 disposed around a post 20. The connectors 16 are mated to secure the element 10 and close seam closure 14. The seam closure is not visible on the outer surface of the cladding element 10 because it camouflaged into or is covered by the ornamental configuration of the outer surface. For additional support, fasteners such as screws or nails (not shown) can be driven through the interior leg of the female connector into the post 20. These fasteners are then covered when the male connector is mated

with the female connector. Male-female connection pair 16 may also be provided with latches (illustrated by latches 21 of male-female pair 16b of FIG. 3B) or barbs (illustrated by barbs 19 of male-female pair 16a of FIG. 3A) ~~(not shown)~~ to further reinforce or secure the connection.

Please amend Paragraph [0017] as follows:

[0017] After the cladding element 10 is secured to the post 20, a decorative molding element, as described in, for example, Davis '920, may be secured proximate to the bottom and/or top portions of the cladding element to cover the end edges of the cladding element. An example of a decorative molding element 30 is shown in FIG. 4.